



THOUGHTS FROM CAPITOL HILL
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Recycled Stimulus Is Still Yesterday's Trash

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The recycled stimulus plan, passed today in the U.S. House of Representatives, is still yesterday's trash.

After months of calls by President Obama for bipartisanship and increased transparency, the Congressional Leadership has fully rejected their own aspirations in order to bypass open conference negotiations on the “stimulus” legislation. Their intentions, it seems, was to jam this massive bill through Congress and onto the American taxpayers.

Unfortunately, they succeeded.

The days of transparency and openness in Congress have come and gone.

Democrat Congressional leaders and White House officials negotiated this conference legislation full of egregious spending without a fragment of public scrutiny or bipartisan involvement.

Although I believe the President had a sincere interest in bipartisan collaboration, the manner in which this package was developed is a sobering demonstration that his own House leadership stubbornly adheres to the bad ideas of a few like-minded individuals.

Just a few days ago, Congress unanimously voted to post this so-called “stimulus” agreement on the Internet for 48 hours to let the American people judge for themselves before a final vote is cast.

Unfortunately, with today's passage of the nearly trillion dollar spending spree, the text of this 1000-plus page bill was just made public less than 24 hours ago.

It appears the American public, including me, will learn the exact contents of this unprecedented spending bill only after the President has signed it into law.

At least one promise made to the American people will be honored—the promise of CHANGE, because change is exactly what we are going to get.

This package will overwhelmingly increase government spending, it overturns decades of proven policy, it establishes countless new programs that will continue to exist year after year and it will lunge our nation into record debt.

These disconcerting effects will resonate for years to come—firmly placing our mistakes on the backs of our kids and grandkids.

I know the American people are hurting; I know something must be done to get our country back on the right track—but this fabricated conception of what a stimulus is supposed to be is not the answer.

Just about every Member of Congress agrees that there is an urgent need to act. But families and small businesses, which are the very heart of this country, need an economic recovery plan that works.

At President Obama's request, House Republicans offered an economic recovery plan that will create twice as many jobs as the Democrats' proposal at half the cost. Unfortunately, this plan fell on deaf ears.

I have said it before and I will say it again—the American people deserve better.

U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, represents the 5th Congressional District and serves on the House Appropriations Committee. He can be reached at the Monroe District Office (318-322-3500), the Alexandria District Office (318-445-0818) or Washington, D.C. (202-225-8490.) Visit Alexander's Web site at www.house.gov/alexander or write him at 316 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

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